Britain and the EU

I. A Turbulent Relationship
II. Main EU Institutions
III. Britain and the Euro
IV. Current Issues
V. Why the ‘Awkward Partner’?
A Turbulent Relationship

- Absent at the Creation -- The ECSC
- The Treaty of Rome and Falling Behind
- Application + Charles de Gaulle = Rejection
- Joining in 1973; referendum in 1975
- Thatcher and the Rebate
- The Single European Act (SEA – 1986)

When Mrs. Thatcher was pro-Europe... from the 1975 referendum campaign.
Britain’s Turbulent History with the EU

- Treaty of European Union (TEA or Maastricht Treaty, 1991)
  - British Opt Outs
- New Labour, but no Single Currency
  - The Five Economic Tests
- Dodging the Constitutional Bullet
- Cameron and the Eurozone Crisis

“Can I join the conversation?”
Main EU Institutions

- European Council (Heads of State)
  - Biannual summit meetings
- Council of the EU (Council of Ministers)
  - One body with multiple configurations
- European Commission
  - Europe’s permanent bureaucracy
- European Parliament

Commission President José Manuel Barroso and Council President Herman von Rompuy
European Parliament

**UK TOTAL MEP SEATS**

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**Political groups**

- EPP (271)
- S&D (190)
- ALDE (85)
- Greens – EFA (58)
- ECR (52)
- EUL-NGL (34)
- EFD (34)
- Non-Inscrits (30)
Britain and the Euro

- The Why and How of the Single Currency
- Convergence criteria (pre-euro)
- Stability and Growth Pact (post-euro)
- Britain and the euro
- Prospects for the Near Term

Which will come out on top?
Current Issues for the EU

- Expansion versus integration (widening v. deepening)
- The ‘Democratic Deficit’
- Structural Reform (Lisbon Agenda)
- EU as a global actor

The European Parliament
Why the Awkward Partner?

- Instrumental affiliation
  - Economic return
  - Policy differences
- Britain’s ‘Atlanticist’ orientation
- Sovereignty
- Identity and History